

# James Blaine McLaughlin



James B. McLaughlin was born in Braxton County and was educated in public schools and at Valparaiso College in Indiana. Although a lifelong farmer, he was instrumental in the organization and operation of several farm organizations.

During World War I, Mr. McLaughlin served as Extension Specialist in Rural Organization. He organized the West Virginia Farm Bureau in 1920 and served as its Executive Secretary from 1920-1927. He organized the West Virginia Farm Bureau Service Company and served as its Secretary-Treasurer and Manager for several years. He was appointed to the State Board of Education in 1925 and reappointed in 1931. He also served as the Secretary of the West Virginia- New York World Fair Committee.

Mr. McLaughlin was elected Commissioner of Agriculture in 1932 and was sworn in on March 4, 1933. He served the remainder of his life as Commissioner. As Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. McLaughlin moved the agricultural laboratories from West Virginia University to Charleston, thus was the first Commissioner to centralize the Department functions. He started the West Virginias Farmers' Markets and was instrumental in helping to design the first of several state agricultural laws of their kind.

The Agricultural Library of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture is named the J.B. McLaughlin Memorial Library in honor of the outstanding service rendered this state by Mr. McLaughlin.